

1. An article transport, meterer and loader comprising:
a plurality of parallel article lanes disposed in vertical relation above and in
angular relation to a direction of orientation of a plurality of parallel
conveyors, said plurality of parallel conveyors including
5 a first article infeed conveyor operating at a first linear speed;
a second metering conveyor operating at a second linear speed having a plurality
of transverse metering lugs disposed at article intervals; and
a third grouping conveyor operating at a third linear speed having a plurality of
transverse grouping lugs disposed at predetermined group intervals;
10 wherein said first linear speed is greater than said third linear speed and said
second linear speed is less than said first linear speed;
whereby articles are metered from said first article infeed conveyor by said
second metering conveyor into article arrays passing between respective
said transverse grouping lugs and subsequently urged from said third
15 grouping conveyor in said array.
2. The invention of claim 1, wherein the angle of said angular relationship is about
18.7 degrees.
- 20 3. The invention of claim 1, wherein said second linear speed is less than said third
linear speed.
4. The invention of claim 1, wherein said second linear speed is substantially equal
to said third linear speed.
25
5. The invention of claim 1, wherein said plurality of parallel article lanes are
selectively engageable.
6. The invention of claim 1, wherein said second linear speed is variable.
30

- [illegible]